

Message Text

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FOR AF/P

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: AF CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 8-13-78

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1. IF IT IS NOT TOO LATE FOR SUGGESTIONS, I RECOMMEND THAT WE CONSIDER HAVING ONE OR MORE CONFERENCE THEMES THAT ARE SUFFICIENTLY CONTINENTAL SO THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS CAN RELATE TO THEM. MOST, IF NOT ALL OF THE TOPICS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL COULD THEN BE EXAMINED AS DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SAME ANIMAL RATHER THAN AS DISEMBODIED AGENDA ITEMS.

2. A THEME THAT COMES TO MIND IS "THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA". CERTAINLY, DOMESTIC PUBLIC ATTENTION HAS, IN RECENT YEARS, FOCUSED EVER MORE ON EVENTS IN AFRICA; THE MOST OBVIOUS CONSEQUENCE OF WHICH HAS BEEN THE GREATER ROLE THAT CONGRESS IS PLAYING IN SHAPING THE POLICY THAT CHIEFS OF MISSION ARE CALLED UPON TO IMPLEMENT AND EXPLAIN IN AFRICA. TOPICS THAT FLOW FROM THIS WOULD INCLUDE, INTER ALIA:

--AN EXAMINATION OF HOW THE USG PERCEPTION OF ITS INTERESTS IN AFRICA IS CHANGING AS A RESULT OF INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DESIGN BY A GROWING NUMBER OF INTERESTED CITIZENS/LEGISLATORS/OBSERVERS. WHAT ARE THE
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FACTORS THAT TRULY INFLUENCE POLICY IN AFRICA? HOW DO THEY INTERRELATE/INTERREACT?.

--AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL ROLE IN AFRICAN POLICY. IS IT WHAT IT SEEMS TO BE? HOW MUCH OF OUR POLICY IS MADE IN ANTICIPATION OF CONGRESSIONAL REACTION THAT MAY NOT HAVE MATERIALIZED, ESPECIALLY IF AN INITIATIVE TAKEN AT SOME RISK WERE SUCCESSFUL? THE RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT,

EMBARGO AMENDMENTS, INTERDICTION OF UGANDA COFFEE, ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO, INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE, ETC. COULD BE STUDIED IN THIS CONTEXT.

--WHAT PROMPTS INITIATIVES? OUTSIDE PRESSURES?

DOMESTIC PRESSURES? ASSUMING THAT THE TERM QUOTE MODERATE UNQUOTE APPLIES TO PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT OUR POINT OF VIEW AND QUOTE PROGRESSIVE UNQUOTE TO THOSE WHO DO NOT, WHAT MORE, INDEED, SHOULD WE BE DOING FOR THE FORMER? DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WOULD MOST LIKELY ENSUE:

---APPLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DOCTRINE.

---ARMS POLICY; FRIENDS IN NEED VERSUS GLOBAL RESTRAINT.

SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE TO OUR FRIENDS.

---ECONOMIC/DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE AS A POLITICAL TOOL OF FOREIGN POLICY RATHER THAN AN EXCLUSIVELY HUMANITARIAN GESTURE THAT WEIGHS AFRICAN NEEDS IN TERMS OF OUR OWN RESOURCE LIMITATIONS WHICH CAN NEVER BE IN BALANCE (FYI: THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN LAST YEAR'S ABIDJAN CONFERENCE WILL REMEMBER THIS AS A SUBJECT OF LIVELY DISCUSSION END FYI).

-- AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF THE NEWS MEDIA, HOW POPULAR PERCEPTIONS ARE SHAPED BY NEWS REPORTS, WHERE THERE IS GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR EXAGGERATION AND MIS-INTERPRETATION BY A PUBLIC THAT HAS SO FEW POINTS OF REFERENCE OR SOURCES OF INFORMATION AS IS THE CASE
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WITH AFRICA. A LOOK AT HOW SOUTH AFRICA INTRUDES ON U.S. DOMESTIC POLICY IN THIS CONTEXT WOULD BE WORTH THE EFFORT SPENT.

--EXAMINATION OF HOW CHIEFS OF MISSION CAN PLAY A MORE INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN DETERMINING POLICY AS WELL AS IMPLEMENTING IT.

3. A STUDY OF QUOTE THE EFFECTS AND COUNTERAFFECTS OF FOREIGN INTRUSION IN AFRICA UNQUOTE COULD BE TREATED EITHER AS A SUB-THEME OR BY ITSELF. IT COULD ENTAIL AN EXAMINATION OF QUOTE OUR UNQUOTE POLICY VERSUS THAT OF THE REST OF THE WORLD.

TOPICS THAT SUGGEST THEMSELVES IN THIS SETTING INCLUDE
--CUBAN AND SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA.. AN EXAMINATION FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW. IS SOVIET POLICY BASED ON OUTDATED GEOPOLITICAL THEORY, AN IF SO, HOW MIGHT THIS AFFECT WHAT WE SHOULD DO? ARE THERE AREAS WHERE WE COULD COOPERATE RATHER THAN COMPETE OR CONFRONT? WHAT ARE OUR COMPETING INTERESTS IN THE HORN?

--WHY IS FRENCH POLICY MORE SUCCESSFUL/LESS SUCCESSFUL THAN OURS? IS IT STILL USEFUL TO U.S. TO ALLOW FRANCE TO CARRY THE BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY AND, OF COURSE,

REAP THE BENEFITS OF A VIRTUAL MONOPOLY IN ECONOMIC AS WELL AS POLITICAL RELATIONS IN ITS FORMER COLONIES? SHOULD WE BE GIVING MORE VISIBLE SUPPORT TO FRANCE'S EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT AND/OR DESTABILIZING INFLUENCE IN AFRICA? WHO WILL FILL THE VACUUM IF FRANCE OPTS OUT, AS IT MIGHT HAVE, UNDER DOMESTIC PRESSURE, IF THE MARCH ELECTIONS RESULTS HAD BEEN DIFFERENT?

-- ARE THERE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE RELATIVE NEWCOMERS ON THE AFRICAN SCENE, E.G., THE CHINESE? THE SAUDIS? CAN WE/SHOULD WE EMULATE THE CHINESE OR COMPETE WITH THEM IN USING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO GREATER POLITICAL/PUBLIC IMAGE ADVANTAGE? (FYI THIS RELATES ALSO TO THE CONGRESSIONAL ROLE AND ITS PERCEIVED OPPOSITION)
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SITION TO INFRASTRUCTURE END FYI). SHOULD WE ENCOURAGE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE FOR THE SAUDIS AS A MEDIATOR IN DISPUTES BETWEEN MUSLIM BROTHERS, FOR EXAMPLE IN THE WESTERN SAHARA?

---CAN THE U.S. HELP THE OAU IMPROVE ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN ADDRESSING AND RESOLVING AFRICAN PROBLEMS? SHOULD WE CONTINUE TO ENDORSE OAU DOGMA THAT PERPETUATES MISTAKES MADE IN EUROPE ALMOST A CENTURY AGO? HOW DOES THIS SQUARE WITH OUR OWN PRINCIPLES OF SELF DETERMINATION?
--AFRO-ARAB RELATIONS AND AFRICA AND THE THIRD WORLD ARE TOPICS THAT DESERVE THE PARTICIPANTS' CLOSE ATTENTION.

4. LAST YEAR THERE WERE RAPORTEURS, BUT TO MY KNOWLEDGE NO PUBLISHED REPORTS. ASSUMING THAT MOST PARTICIPANTS WOULD FIND A WRITTEN RECORD OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS USEFUL, AND MINDFUL OF THE BURDEN THIS MIGHT PLACE ON DESK OFFICERS, I SUGGEST THAT WE ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM AMONG THE GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO SERVED IN THIS YEAR'S OVERSEAS INTERN PROGRAM TO FILL THIS ROLE. KRYZA

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